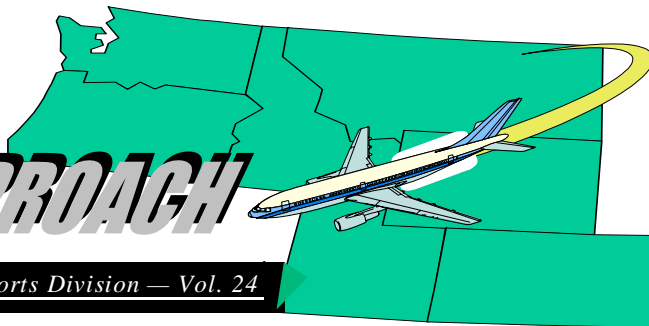




U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region

December 2004

THE AIRPORTS APPROACH



A Publication of the Northwest Mountain Region Airports Division — Vol. 24

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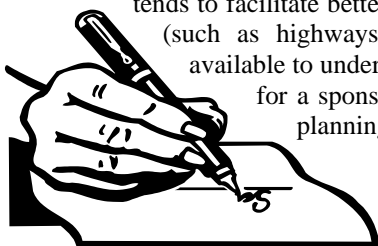
A signed Appropriations Act means a “Happy New Year” for Airports

With the President's December 8 signing of the "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (H.R. 4818)," funds became available to the Department of Transportation and eight other government departments. However, before the Federal Aviation Administration can issue grants, internal government processing must occur.

This process includes an apportionment schedule from the Office of Management and Budget, and the apportionment of funds to each modal agency. Typically, this takes about 30 to 45 days, but the holidays may add to this delay. On a positive note, with Secretary Norman Mineta's continued tenure in the President's Cabinet, there should be no further delays attributed to the orientation of a new Secretary and staff. Even so, as I gaze into my government-issued crystal ball, I do not expect to see funds available for grants until early February 2005.

During this grant inactivity time, we can still work on grant closeouts and prepare offers to accept grants as soon as possible after the Airport Improvement Program funds are available. In order to accomplish this, early project formulation and coordination with your local Airports District Offices (ADO's) should already be under way. If it is not, it is imperative that each sponsor begin this initiative immediately.

Remember, early grant acceptance leads to a longer construction season. It also tends to facilitate better bids, because there may be less grant work available (such as highways), which could mean more contractors ready and available to undertake new work. With this in mind, the ideal scenario is for a sponsor already to have selected a consultant for design or planning.



If you anticipate a fiscal year 2005 grant, and have not done so, you should immediately contact your ADO to start the project formulation process.

— Warren Ferrell



Editor: Nancy Royak
Airports Division
December 2004

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